

In Pursuit of “Pancho” Villa: The Delaware National Guard’s 1916 Mexican Border Service

In 1916, Mexican Revolutionary General Francisco “Pancho” Villa, led a raid against the U.S.-Mexican border town of Columbus, New Mexico. The U.S. government sent U.S. Army General John J. Pershing to capture Villa in an unsuccessful nine-month incursion into Mexican sovereign territory that ended when the United States entered World War I. Among Pershing’s troops were members of the Delaware National Guard. On **Saturday, August 20, at 10:30 a.m.** General Kennard Wiggins, Jr., USA, (Ret.), will be presenting a program at the Delaware Public Archives about the Delaware troops who served in this campaign. This presentation, a Delaware World War I Centennial Event, is sponsored jointly by the Delaware Public Archives and the Delaware Heritage Commission. Copies of General Wiggins’s new book, *Delaware in World War I*, will be available for purchase at the event, with a book-signing to follow.

General Wiggins, who retired from active duty in 2004, began his military service when he enlisted in the Delaware Air National Guard as a Reciprocating Aircraft Engine Mechanic in February, 1966. He served in a variety of assignments before he was commissioned in 1978 as the Public Affairs Officer with the 166th Airlift Group. He entered active duty in 1986, holding positions at Andrews Air Force Base. In 1997, he was assigned to duty at the Pentagon. General Wiggins is the author of illustrated histories of the Delaware Air National Guard, the Army National Guard, Dover Air Force Base, and Delaware Aviation. He was a contributing author to *Histories of Newark, 1758-2008*, and recently published his latest book, *Delaware in World War I*. Among other interests, he presently serves as vice-chairman of the board of directors of the Delaware Military Heritage and Education Foundation.

The program is free to the public and will last approximately one hour. No reservations are required. For more information, contact Tom Summers (302) 744-5047 or e-mail thomas.summers@delaware.gov.

The Delaware Public Archives is located at 121 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard North in Dover. The Mabel Lloyd Ridgely Research Room is open to the public Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. On the second Saturday of every month the research room is open from 9 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

Delaware Public Archives (DPA, archives.delaware.gov), an agency of the State of Delaware, is one of the oldest public archives programs in the United States. DPA serves the citizens of Delaware by identifying, collecting, and preserving public records of enduring historical and evidential value; ensuring access to public records for present and future generations; and advising and educating interested parties in the creation, management, use, and preservation of public records.